

SIERRA CLUB BULLETIN

VOLUME 29 • NUMBER 3



JUNE • 1944

Published bimonthly by the Sierra Club, 220 Bush Street, San Francisco 4, California. Annual dues are \$4.00 (first year \$5.00), of which \$1.00 is for subscription to Sierra Club Bulletin. Entered as second-class matter at Post Office, San Francisco, under Act of March 3, 1879.

Contributions on subjects of interest to Sierra Club members are welcome, and should be sent to the Editorial Board.

Francis P. Farquhar, *Editor*; Harriet T. Parsons, *Associate Editor*; Barbara Bedayn, David R. Brower, Weldon F. Heald, Charlotte E. Mauk, Marion R. Parsons, Blanche Stallings.

Danger Ahead

There are many differences of opinion as to what projects are essential and what are non-essential in current and postwar planning. The Sierra Club, in its various publications, has at times warned the conservationists to watch carefully, as our wildernesses, forests and parks are always threatened at times like these, by planning which we consider not only non-essential but downright dangerous.

The National Park Service and the U. S. Forest Service are faced by powerful interests which try in every way to push their projects in the name of progress or necessity. Roads, dams, timber cutting, grazing, and mining; some of it now is called "essential to the war effort." Over and over again it has been proved by statistics that a project which is called "essential" provides the tiniest fraction of the essential material compared to the amount of destruction wrought in providing it.

And now comes the postwar planning. Roads across the mountains—projects which we have worked to prevent, and which were postponed for the duration—are now being urged as immediate necessities after the war.

It is hoped that Sierra Club members will

read the following articles in this issue, and realize the seriousness of these current and postwar plans. Grazing in the national parks is broached as a necessity during every war, and we think is well answered in the editorial from the *Santa Rosa Republican*. A committee including William E. Colby, Duncan McDuffie, Arthur H. Blake, and Robert C. Miller, representing respectively the Sierra Club, the Save-The-Redwoods League, the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs, and the California Conservation Council, is working on this immediate problem. The proposed road over Kearsage Pass makes us shudder, not only at the complete disregard of the wilderness status of that area, but the impracticality of the project and the enormous expenditure necessary to attain this irreparable destruction to Kings Canyon National Park.

Grazing of Cattle in National Parks Unnecessary and Inadvisable

The following editorial appeared in the *Santa Rosa Republican* on May 18, 1944:

Keep Cattle Out of Parks

The proposal of stockmen that the national parks of California be thrown open as grazing land is meeting with stiff opposition from the parks association. We believe the association members are correct in their contention that the running of cattle in the national parks would be harmful and inadvisable.

Livestock interests have demanded the privilege of putting their herds into the parks, declaring that the regular ranges, due to the lack of rainfall, have insufficient grass to sustain the cattle.

It appears to us that there is more and greener grass on the rangelands of California right now than usual. Late rains, although light, have been sufficient to bring the grasses to a good stand. Certainly it has rained as much in other parts of the state as it has in the national forests.

It is asserted by the National Parks Association that fewer than one per cent of the cattle in California could be accommodated on the flower-filled meadows of the California national parks. If this is true, it seems ridiculous

to deface the primeval scenery of Sequoia, Yosemite, Kings Canyon and Lassen Volcanic national parks for the sake of trivial commercial benefits.

The national park system of the United States is one of the great institutions for the preservation of which this war is being fought.

Proposed Road Over Kearsage Pass Opposed by Sierra Club

As a result of protests received from members of the Sierra Club and others, the Board of Directors authorized the following letter which was sent both to the Federal Public Roads Administration and the State Highway Commission:

The Sierra Club has been advised that there is a strong local movement on foot to connect the road which now reaches the lower end of the South Fork, Kings River Canyon, with the road from Independence which now ends at Onion Valley. This is being urged as a post-war project. We trust that it will not meet with the approval of your commission. There are a great many reasons why this road should not be built and among the most important are:

1. It would extend through the heart of the recently created Kings Canyon National Park which, by the express terms of the Act, was dedicated by Congress to "the permanent preservation of the wilderness character."

2. This road could only be built at tremendous expense. Kearsage Pass (elevation

The people of this state value their great parks too highly to advocate injury to them for the sake of a few hundred pounds of beef that probably would not be lost in any event.

Private interests are getting away with too many questionable practices through appeal to patriotism and supposed war necessity.

11,823 feet) is one of the highest passes across the Sierra and the ascent from Onion Valley on the east side and the descent into Kings River Canyon on the west side are through narrow, steep, rocky gorges, subject to rock and snow avalanches which occur every winter. The enormous expense of building this road could be far more profitably devoted to more usable roads elsewhere.

3. The road would serve very little useful purpose because it would only be open for three months at the most in ordinary years because of the heavy snows at this high altitude, and in years like the winters of 1906 and 1907 the road would have been closed during the entire year.

4. The destruction to magnificent scenery in building a usable road through these steep but magnificent canyons would be an irreparable loss.

We trust that you will not consider any such project with favor. We will gladly furnish data to back up our views as above expressed.

W.E.C.

Conservation Notes

Are We Inarticulate? In the latest issue of *The Living Wilderness*, Lyle F. Watts, Chief of the Forest Service, pleads for action upon the part of conservation associations in an article entitled "Do the People Really Want Forest Conservation?" He states that these organizations are so inarticulate that no one can hear the voice of popular interest against the strong-voiced opposition of special interests. It is a fair warning and one we should heed.

California Conservation Council Holds Interesting Meeting. At the Regional meeting of the California Conservation Council on June 17 in San Francisco, speakers from the Army, the Department of Natural Resources, the U. S. Soil Conservation Service, and the University of California, all stressed the necessity of conservation in the war effort. The importance of a long range policy of good forest management and soil conservation was indicated, and the immediate dan-

gers if these problems are ignored was emphasized.

It was shown how California as well as the rest of the country is threatened by soil erosion, although a successful and growing number of farmer-owned and farmer-administered soil conservation districts are already saving soil and increasing agricultural production.

In the discussion of forest problems it was once more brought to conservationists' notice

that fifty percent of all lumber products supplying the country's war and domestic needs comes from the western states; and that more timber is being used in this state than is grown. A program of forest conservation, protection and renewal is of course one of recognized importance, and is being carried on very successfully to a certain extent, although forest fires and other dangers continually threaten and complicate these programs.

Harvest Camp Plans Completed

Announcements have gone out to the San Francisco Bay Chapter members, of the Sierra Club Harvest Camp at St. Helena, California. The dates of the camp are August 27-September 18. Members of the chapter will be sent full information later, but anyone else interested may procure this information by writing to the Sierra Club office, Mills

Tower, 220 Bush St., San Francisco, Calif.

This year even more than ever, our help is needed; there is food to be gathered in every part of the state, and a greater scarcity of helpers. Plan to spend your vacation or part of it, helping in this vital work. It is fun, it is interesting, it is out-of-doors, and most important, it is essential.

Among Our Contemporaries

Federation Convention Date Announced. It has been announced that the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs will hold a one-day convention again, on Sunday, September 3. The Mazamas have offered their clubroom in Portland as they did last year.

Mazamas to Hold Jubilee Celebration. The anniversary of the founding of the Mazamas takes place on July 22 and 23. Fifty years ago on the summit of Mount Hood the Mazamas were organized. The club will celebrate the occasion at the Annual Outing camp at Phlox Point, where they will assemble for a reunion, and their anniversary climb of Mount Hood.

Variety in Mountaineering Journals. In spite of the war most of the mountaineering clubs have managed to get out their annual magazine number each year. It is well worth a few hours in the library to look through these journals and see how our contemporaries are carrying on. There is always some article of interest to be found.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club, curtailed by war, is making the most of its own mountains, and in the April 1944 number of its *Journal* shows that there is fine and interesting climbing to be done near at home.

The Canadian Alpine Journal for 1942-1943 has another account of the second climb of Mount Waddington, by Helmy Beckey, brother of Fred, whose story of their climb was published in *The Mountaineer* for December 1942. Another article of interest in the *Journal*, is "Little Yoho Valley Military Camp," by H. J. Graves. This tells of the part taken by the Alpine Club of Canada in the training of mountain troops. In 1942 seventeen officers of the Canadian Army received instruction at Consolation Valley. Then in 1943 the club was asked to train a larger number of men in Yoho Valley, in lieu of the annual outing.

Appalachia for June 1944 should interest those who have been hearing of "Jam Crack Joe" and other Potomac climbers. Donald

Hubbard's "Rock Climbing Along the Potomac" reveals that area rich in varied and unusual climbs. An account of a successful and well-carried-out expedition is the "Log of Greenland Ice Cap Party," by Lt. Peter H. Hostmark. This is from the log book of a salvage party to a wrecked airplane in Greenland in December 1943.

Of interest is an article in the *American*

Alpine Journal for 1944, by Sierra Club member William Shand Jr. on "Some Yosemite Rock Climbs," in which he tells of climbing some of our familiar spots—the Spires, Washington Column, Pulpit Rock and others. Also in this issue is Bradford Washburn's account of "Alaska and the War," well illustrated with many of his fine photographs of Alaskan mountains.

Lodge Notes

A Reminder. Membership cards are required of all members visiting *any* of the lodges, as it is not possible for the custodians to know who is a member and who is not. So when you leave for your vacation at Norden, Tuolumne Meadows, or any of the Southern lodges, do not forget your card, as it not only

adds to the custodian's difficulties, but may complicate your own vacation.

Shasta Alpine Lodge. Word has just come that there will probably be a custodian at Shasta during part of July and possibly all of August. Arrangements are now being made, and should soon be definite.

Committee Appointments for 1944-1945

Editorial—Francis P. Farquhar (editor), Harriet T. Parsons (associate editor), Barbara Bedayn, David R. Brower, Weldon F. Heald, Charlotte E. Mauk, Marion R. Parsons, Blanche Stallings.

Glacier Study—Oliver Kehrlein (chairman), Eliot Blackwelder, Richard M. Leonard, François E. Matthes.

High Sierra Trails—Arthur H. Blake (chairman).

Library—Alfred E. Weiler (chairman), W. T. Allemann, John Thomas Howell, Nancy MacCabe, Mary M. Myers, Vernie Ordway, H. A. S. Pollard, Frances Osborne Stallings.

Subcommittee on Exhibits and Folklore—Blanche Stallings (chairman), C. A. Harwell, Ray Strong.

Lodge—Arthur H. Blake (chairman), Virginia Adams, Lewis F. Clark, Robert F. MacConaghy, Charlotte E. Mauk, Richard H. Trimble.

Outing—Herbert L. Breed (chairman), Phil S. Bernays, Oliver Kehrlein.

Winter Sports—Richard H. Felter (chairman), Joel H. Hildebrand (Technical), Richard N. Burnley (Clair Tappaan, Ski Tow), Charlotte E. Mauk (Peter Grubb Ski Hut), Oliver Kehrlein (White Rock Ski Hut, Publicity), Alexander Hildebrand (Tests), Glenn L. Weber (Ski Patrol, Local Touring), W. Kenneth Davis (Equipment), Kenneth D. Adam (Ski Camping).

Visual Education—Doris F. Leonard (chairman), Kenneth D. Adam, Charlotte E. Mauk.

Clair Tappaan Lodge—Richard N. Burnley (chairman), Arthur H. Blake, Laurence Burnley, Mary M. Herman, Violet Neuenburg (Bay Chapter representatives), Hermann L. Horn (Loma Prieta Chapter representative), Margaret Klausner (Mother Lode Chapter representative), Richard H. Felter, Charlotte E. Mauk, Glenn L. Weber (Winter Sports Committee representatives), Joseph C. Staudinger (representative at large), June Felter, George L. Greves, Alexander Hildebrand, Louise H. Klein, Doris F. Leonard, Florence Robinson (advisory members).

Club
ne Yo-
ells of
s—the
Rock
adford
and the
his fine

ut may
t come
dian at
bly all
being

(chair-
anical),
an, Ski
ubb Ski
ock Ski
ebrand
l, Local
ement),

eonard
harlotte

. Burn-
aurence
Neuen-
, Her-
r repre-
er Lode
Felter,
(Win-
, Joseph
, June
Hilde-
eonard,
rs).